



April is Financial Literacy Month

## Arizona Declared 2008 National LifeSmarts Champions

*Flagstaff Home Educators Beat out 28 States at Annual Teen Consumer Education Competition*

**National Consumers League** Press Release, April 21, 2008

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Washington, D.C. — The Arizona state LifeSmarts team from Flagstaff, coached by Jennifer Bearchell, has taken the 2008 National LifeSmarts title, defeating more than two dozen state champion teams from across the country in a double-elimination competition that wrapped up in Minneapolis, Minnesota last week. Bearchell's team, the Flagstaff Home Educators, defeated the Illinois team from West Chicago Community High School in the grueling final match Tuesday morning, April 15<sup>th</sup>. The event was streamed live on USTelecom's [www.NextGenWeb.org](http://www.NextGenWeb.org) Web site.

"Bankruptcy, the credit crunch, fraud, confusion over health care and medical information - these are just a few of the challenges facing American consumers today," said Sally Greenberg, Executive Director of the National Consumers League, the nonprofit advocacy group that sponsors the national LifeSmarts program.

"LifeSmarts students and especially the 2008 champion team from Arizona represent a new generation of young consumers who have tackled these tough issues and now have the tools they need to the smarts they need to thrive in this marketplace."



LifeSmarts ([www.lifesmarts.org](http://www.lifesmarts.org)) is an Internet-based competition that begins online, in the states, with high school students competing for a shot to represent their state at the national event. State programs are run by volunteer coordinators; Arizona's State Coordinator is Tammy Miller, with the Office of the Attorney General. In the 2007-2008 competition, more than 20,000 teens answered 2.6 million consumer questions for a shot at nationals.

"We are so thrilled for our state champion team, the Flagstaff Home Educators," said Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard. "Their hard work and dedication to becoming savvy consumers has paid off, and they will represent our state program with pride."

For the last two years, the team from neighboring New Mexico's Piedra Vista High School reigned as the National LifeSmarts Champions, but early in the first round of the competition, which ran April 12-14 in Minneapolis, the Arizona team defeated the returning champs, sending them to the consolation bracket. Arizona's Flagstaff Home Educators fell in a later round to the team from Virginia, but it rebounded later to make it to the semi-finals. Arizona defeated a tough team from Rhode Island and, finally, New Hampshire, before competing in the final match.

"What an exciting weekend in Minneapolis," said Coach Bearchell. "We are grateful for the support of parents, loved ones, and friends and, of course, to the Arizona Office of the Attorney General for bringing the LifeSmarts program to Arizona. The members of our team are sure walking on air, and we have such gratitude for this great opportunity. It was great fun to put all that consumer knowledge to work. "

Bearchell's first place team members each received a variety of prizes, including an iPhone from AT&T, savings bonds, and gift cards to Best Buy and Staples. Coach Bearchell received a certificate good for a new set of Bridgestone tires. This is Bearchell's 8<sup>th</sup> year of competing in LifeSmarts in Arizona, and her 8<sup>th</sup> trip to the National Championship.

At the end of the long weekend of competition and fun, NCL announced that St. Louis, MO, will be the destination for next year's 2009 National LifeSmarts Championship. For more information, and to read about this year's event, visit the LifeSmarts blog at: <http://lifesmartsnationals.blogspot.com/>

NCL thanks the generous contributions of its major sponsors, including the Verizon Foundation, American Century Investments, American Express Company, and others, ([http://www.lifesmarts.org/index.php?page=national\\_sponsors](http://www.lifesmarts.org/index.php?page=national_sponsors)) as well as its Minnesota partner, the Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota.

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#### About LifeSmarts and NCL

LifeSmarts is a teen consumer literacy program that develops the consumer and marketplace knowledge and skills of teenagers. The competition begins online at the state level, where teens form teams and are quizzed at [www.lifesmarts.org](http://www.lifesmarts.org) on issues ranging from personal finance and health and safety to the environment, technology, and consumer rights and responsibilities. The **National Consumers League**, founded in 1899, is America's pioneer consumer organization. Our mission is to protect and promote social and economic justice for consumers and workers in the United States and abroad. For more information, visit [www.nclnet.org](http://www.nclnet.org).